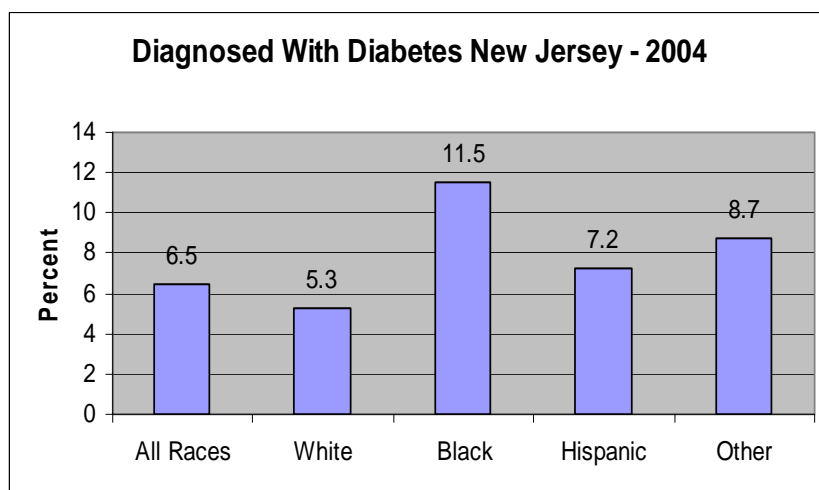


Diabetes

- Diabetes mellitus is a life-threatening disease in which the body either does not produce or does not properly use insulin. Insulin is a hormone that the body needs to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy. Diabetes can be associated with serious health problems including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, stroke, neuropathy (disease of the nerves) and lower-extremity amputations.
- There are two major types of diabetes. Type 1 diabetes (previously called juvenile diabetes) results from the body's inability to produce insulin. It is estimated that 5-10% of Americans diagnosed with diabetes have type 1 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes (previously called adult-onset diabetes) results from insulin resistance, combined with relative insulin deficiency. Approximately 90-95% of Americans who are diagnosed with diabetes have type 2 diabetes.



- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data for 2004 estimate that in New Jersey, approximately 444,000 adults 18 years or older, 6.8% of the adult population, have been diagnosed with diabetes.
- Diabetes disproportionately affects ethnic and racial minorities. In 2004, non-Hispanic blacks had the highest age-adjusted prevalence rate of diabetes at 11.5%, followed by Hispanics at 7.2%, and non-Hispanic whites at 5.3%.
- In 2003, the age-adjusted mortality rate of diabetes was 26.7 per 100,000 and diabetes was the fifth overall leading cause of death. Also, the age-adjusted mortality rate of diabetes for African-Americans was more than twice that of Whites, 55 as apposed to 24 per 100,000.
- Risk factors for type 2 diabetes include increasing age, overweight, family history, physical inactivity, certain race/ethnicity categories, having a history of gestational diabetes or obesity, delivery of a baby weighing over nine pounds, and conditions associated with insulin resistance such as high cholesterol and /or high blood pressure.
- Among high-risk adults, lifestyle changes such as improving diet and increasing levels of moderate physical activity have been found to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes among high-risk adults.
- People diagnosed with type 1 diabetes require insulin since the pancreas does not secrete it. Insulin must be administered by injections or insulin pump to compensate for the lack of insulin produced by the pancreas.
- Under most circumstances, the first approach in treating type 2 diabetes may involve only diet modification, weight loss and physical activity. Frequently, diabetes is not controlled by this approach and pills and/or insulin injections are needed in addition to these lifestyle modifications.

- People with diabetes must control their blood pressure, serum cholesterol, triglycerides, and glucose levels. They should also manage their diets and engage in physical activity in order to best control the disease. Additionally, self-monitoring of blood sugar by fingerstick is necessary to help the patient to manage their diabetes.
- Other important components of care for people with diabetes include diabetes education, an annual flu shot, and routine eye exams, foot exams, A1C tests (measurements of blood sugar control over the last 3 months), and pneumococcal immunization as recommended by their doctor.
- Progress is ongoing in the field of diabetes. The future holds the promise of insulin inhalers, non-invasive glucose monitoring, surgical pancreatic cell transplants to reverse the disease, and possibly even immunizations against type 1 diabetes.

For more data and information about diabetes visit the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services Diabetes Prevention and Control Program: <http://www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/diabinde.html>

For more information about American Diabetes Month visit: <http://www.diabetes.org/homepage.jsp>

Sources:

American Diabetes Association: “[Basic Diabetes Information](#)”

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “[National Diabetes Fact Sheet](#)”

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Center for Health Statistics:

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[New Jersey Behavioral Risk Factor Survey](#), unpublished data

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